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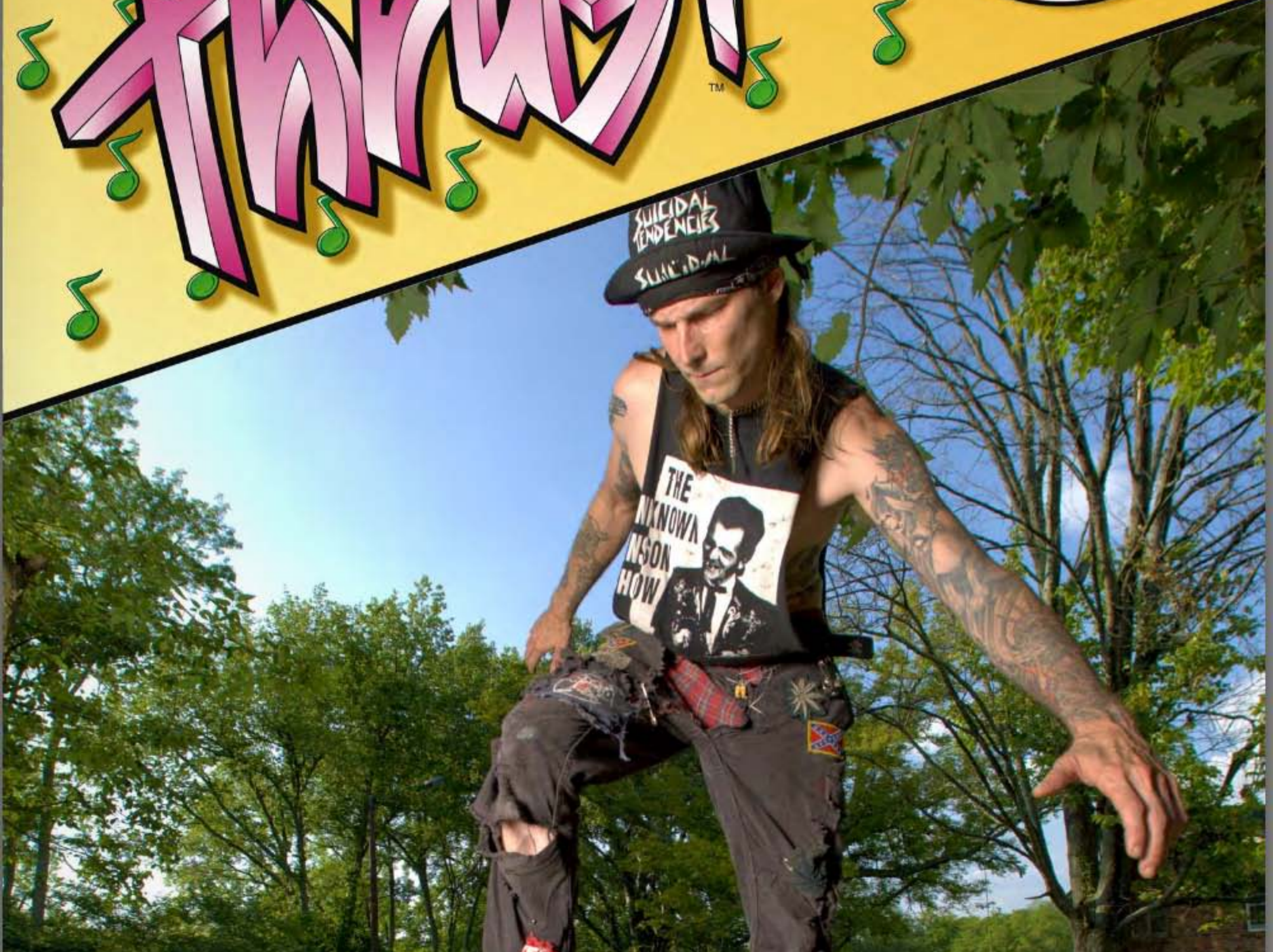
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Hank3 Redefines Americana

Plus: Hank Williams Sr., Reverend Peyton's Big Damn Band, Jefferson Starship, Matt Harlan, Radio-Free Carmela, and More!

“Do As I Please”

**Hank3
Redefines
Americana**

by *Thrust Magazine* Contributing Writer M. Alberto Rivera

Any notion of Hank3 attempting to ride the coattails of his famous family can easily be dismissed out of hand after hearing his three new releases. He acknowledges his legacy, as well as the varied musical influences that helped shape him, but he is his own man with his own unique artistic vision, and this is what guides him.

Hank3 was fed up and frustrated with his record label and the ever-growing collection of unreleased material he was accumulating. As soon as his contract with Curb Records expired he started Hank3 Records. His first releases as a newly independent artist on an independent label come out as four CDs on Sept. 6: *Ghost to a Ghost/Guttertown* (a two-disc CD), *Attention Deficit Domination 3 Bar Ranch*, and *Cattle Callin*.

His live shows are legendary. They last three to three-and-a-half hours every night, covering a broad musical spectrum, including country, speed metal, doom rock, and whatever else Hank3 feels like playing on any particular evening.

Then there's his storied musical and family legacy which has been the soundtrack for America since 1937. Hank Sr., as he's often referred to, had 11 number-one hits during his career. The Hank Williams songbook has been covered from artists ranging from Johnny Cash to Tony Bennett and is still being discovered by new audiences every day.

Hank Williams Jr., Hank3's father, is no slouch either. Country-music radio was initially resistant to his sound but eventually gave way. With a great many CMA awards, his songs became staples of country radio in the '80s and he continues to be a top-drawing performer.

And now Hank3 continues this mindset. All three Hanks have always insisted on doing their music their own way and have succeeded on their own terms. Any notion of Hank3 attempting to ride the coattails of his famous family can easily be dismissed out of hand after hearing his three new releases. He acknowledges his legacy, as well as the varied musical influences that helped shape him, but he is his own man with his own unique artistic vision,

and this is what guides him.

Thrust™ Magazine was fortunate enough to sit down with Hank and get his thoughts on all things related to his new releases.

THRUST MAGAZINE: The only other artist to ever attempt to release four albums at once was Frank Zappa, with *Lather* (pronounced 'Leather'), and Warner Bros. never followed through. So you're the only one. What was your inspiration for releasing all four CDs at the same time?



HANK3: I've been sat on for 15 years, and I only have five albums to show for it. Starting up my own record label, I wanted to come out the gate strong and do something that's different. I don't think it's been done before, tackling three different genres with three different releases. Let's try something different. It's a time to give and it's time to change things up a little bit. I don't have to deal with four lawyers anymore. If I want to release five records the same day, I'll do it. If I want to release one song, I'll do it.

THRUST: Was this (releasing three CD packages at once) a breaking point with Curb Records? Was this

the reason for the split, or is this the reason you started your own label?

HANK3: Curb only held me back over the years. They never liked what I did. My contract was finally over with Curb. I was able to start all over.

Look at Tim McGraw. He's made millions and millions of dollars and [the record label is] still not happy with him. They're holding him up in court forever. It's never enough for those people.

I served my time at Curb Records. I only have five records to show—shoot, in 15 years Hank Jr. probably put out 35 records. They just sat on me. They killed me creatively. And that's not what I'm about. I'm about playing for the working man. I'm about giving it away. I put my pants on like any other [man] out there.

It's kind of the way I've functioned. I'm not about playing only 20 shows a year and then charging \$150 a ticket. I play for three hours. I have the longest-running show for the ticket price. And I take pride in that. People identify with it. It's helped pay me back a little bit.

THRUST: Of the four CDs do you have a favorite?

HANK3: *Ghost to a Ghost* is taken more serious. *Guttertown* was my way of having fun. At the end of the day, when we'd have a more serious session, it was my way of letting loose and having some fun. When I was done with *Guttertown*, I went on to the doom, writing heavy riffs, working on that slow sound.

Then I got overwhelmed with the *Cattle Callin'* auctioneers, and getting on the phone with them. I wanna do something that's not been tapped into before.

You're probably not gonna get it; you're gonna hate the music. But I'm not makin' fun of you. I was raised

with cattle. I worked with cattle. I branded cattle, I milked cattle; I used to go to auction barns with my grandpa. I wanted to do something in the metal world that's never been done before. The speed of the drums and the speed of the auctioneers, I think it's a good fit. I wanted to bring new inspiration to young auctioneers in a different kind of way. Me trying to convince some of these older folks who might not like what they see when they pull up Hank3.

Where the inspiration for this record came from was from Pantera and Immortal. That's why there's songs like "Black Cow," "Cow Mortal," and "Angus of Death." Bringing some light to something that's been so dark.

THRUST: How did you go about picking out the auctioneers for *Cattle Callin'*? Did you face any hesitation from the guys you wanted or were they all happy to get on board?

HANK3: Some of the best auctioneers that I wanted to use said, "No way." Ken Dowler never hesitated; hats off to him lettin' me create my vision that I'm so serious about. He's been very friendly to the art world whether it's music or movies. He was like, "Go for it." Ken was so supportive.

Other guys, I'd be on the phone with them for weeks; they'd flip-flop. They'd want to know, "Are there gonna be any cuss words on this record?" Which is why I say at the end of it, "Oh yeah, no cussin' is on this record."

Some of them old guys are set in their ways. They think I'm makin' fun of them, that I'd be misrepresenting them. It's a really small world in the auctioning world. It was very frustrating to build a whole song around a chant and then not be able to use it.

The big thing now is trying to find an auctioneer kid who wants to go on the road. The biggest challenge now is to get it ready for the road ... find a drummer who can fit my style. For now we're gonna play around samples.

THRUST: I hear a lot of Black Flag, Melvins, and St. Vitus on *Attention Deficit Domination*. Were there any specific artists you looked to for inspiration when you were writing the music?

HANK3: And Sleep. If it weren't for these bands, I wouldn't be playing that style. They were such an inspiration for me. A little bit of history: live, I've reunited all of Sleep's old green gear. I'm using Al [Cisneros]' green bass cabinet and all of Matt Pike's green guitar cabinets—the ones they used on the Jerusalem records. My guitar is running through all of them at once. That's why on the *A.D.D.* shows we start off each set by playing a 10-minute Sleep number, as a sign of respect for all the doom guys who paved the way for me.

[I've got to thank the] work mentality of a band like Melvins. It just shows it's about longevity. There's a band that's gotten better with time. And they make it look easy. Buzz [Osborne] has had his look and his sound ever since he was a 16-year-old kid. He can write great songs all day long. Him and Dale [Crover], what a combo. Never once have they broken up.

THRUST: How much of the new releases will get performed on this next tour?

HANK3: It's hard to say. I'm doing a lot of shows around town right now. I am doing every song off the *A.D.D.* CD. Once the *Cattle Callin'* songs get worked into the set, we'll just have to see. I'm killin' my drummer right now, playing three and 1/2 hours of country, 30 minutes of hellbilly, and then doing an hour on the *A.D.D.* I'll look back at him and I'm like, "Dude, are you hanging in there?" When we have to do this night after night after night, I'm trying to prepare.

I have another drummer in town trying to prepare. It's a lot of territory to cover. A lot of energy and stamina. People think, "I'm going to play with Hank3! Whoo-hoo! Get drunk and get stoned!" Guess what [man], I'm gonna work you till you can't play anymore. While I have the energy, I'm trying to take it to the next level.

The last thing we're working on is getting the *Cattle Callin'* songs ready.

THRUST: Your live show is a mixed bag of music, like this collection. Is there a part of the show you enjoy more than the others, or does it change?

HANK3: It changes every night. It depends on my voice: if I have a country voice or not, if I wake up with my country twang on the road.

When I can't sing country, I feel like I'm ripping my fans off and that's the worst feeling in the world. At least my fans are cool enough. They understand if I'm sick or if my voice is shot. It's something I have to deal with a lot. They know [if] I'm sick, I'm still puttin' my balls on the plate and trying to deliver. If the spirit is in the room, we're all gonna have a good time.

THRUST: Now that you've established yourself as an artist in your own right, what do you have to say to your critics who said you were riding the coattails of your family legacy?

HANK3: I do what I do. Some people dig and others don't. Do I get a single check from the Hank Williams Estate? No, I don't. Could I have taken the easy road? Yes, I could've, but I didn't.

Did I step up and pay for my child?

I wasn't a deadbeat dad. I took care of my child and paid my dues and stayed true to my music. I stay humble. I say hello. I've had some of my heroes jerk me around and piss me off, and I never wanted to be like that. I do what I do and I can't please everybody, and that's not my problem.

THRUST: I know you just wrapped up this monster of a project, but what do you want to do next?

HANK3: Right now I just want to focus on the road. I'm gonna tour the road as much as I can and hopefully break even and hit Japan, Europe, Australia—go to all these places I haven't been able to play too much. Then do it all over again. I won't be hearing as good, but I'll be turning those knobs!

For more information on Hank3, visit his official website at www.hank3.com.

